

ROUTING

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PLANS

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OXC-0262-67

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25X1A

26 January 1967

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Review of Accident Board Recommendations  
(Article 125) Regarding Life Support Equipment.

1. The following recommendations have had action taken as indicated.

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a. Remove head-rest spacers. Reverse nuts and bolts on front of seat which secure rotary actuator straps. These recommendations have been satisfied as of 12 January 1967. (Ref [REDACTED] 4632 IN 99524). However, investigation must be re-established to develop a means of insuring all crew members can reach the headrest regardless of torso height (ref Accident Board recommendations from Accident Report on aircraft 2003). LAC has proposed a parachute modification to aid in allowing the head to reach the headrest and this proposal is being evaluated in terms of parachute integrity by the parachute manufacturer at the present time. In addition, this modified parachute must be fitted to each driver and accurate comparative measurements made to determine its effectiveness in allowing the head to reach the headrest. I have discussed this approach with [REDACTED] at LAC and [REDACTED] from Firewel (Prime contractor on parachute) and will attempt to schedule such an evaluation in the immediate future.

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b. Expedite emergency faceplate heating and protective cover for the controller. A prototype controller cover was built and tested by LAC and 20 items are now in production. Verification tests will be required when these become available to insure that no restriction to ventilation has resulted. In addition, the item will require further consideration by [REDACTED] personnel as to its possible effectiveness in preventing damage to the controller and/or connections. In these respects the item must remain an evaluation item for the time being. The

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emergency faceplate heating provisions have been under development by LAC. The number, size, and type of batteries required have been established and location and wiring has been mocked-up. This prototype package should be ready for evaluation at [REDACTED] by the week of 30 January 1967 according to telecon with [REDACTED] on 24 January 1967. In addition to [REDACTED] personnel evaluation, I have instructed the Firewel Co. (prime contractor on parachute system) to submit an evaluation on this item since the LAC proposal is to locate the batteries in the cover for the oxygen/initiator pan of the parachute back pack. Whirl tower and/or high speed drop tests may be required on this item before final approval can be given, to insure that proper parachute sequencing is not impaired by this modification.

c. Lap belt automatic release mechanism rework to prevent tension or side load binding. Develop a readily accessible manual release lever.

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LAC is presently investigating these items to determine what corrective measures can be made. [REDACTED] tests and modifications of the MA-6 lap belt are being reviewed and LAC is conducting their own series of tests at this time. A test report is to be provided the undersigned upon completion.

d. Apply smooth surfaces to headrest underside and top of stabilization parachute pack.

I have directed the prime parachute contractor to evaluate smooth materials for the pack as part of the parachute modification referred to in paragraph 1 a above. A smooth coating for the headrest underside is being investigated by LAC.

e. Reposition Rotary Actuator to provide maximum forward thrust to man/parachute.

LAC has initiated a redesign of the ejection seat headrest to include repositioning of the rotary actuator.

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f. Shoulder harness loops sewn to prevent slipping over automatic latch level housing.

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This minor modification can be made by LAC personnel at [REDACTED]. At the same time LAC is sewing the shoulder harness strap to the inertia reel strap to preclude the bunching-up of the shoulder strap into a rope-like configuration. This modification, which was discussed during the week of 9 January, will also aid in providing a smoother area between the headrest and stabilization parachute.

g. D-Ring cable-cutter installation.

This recommendation will require extensive consideration before a decision can be made to proceed or not. Because of the design of the OXCART ejection D-ring/T-handle combination a simple inclusion of the D-ring cable cutter from the SR-71 stabilized seat, which does not have the secondary T-handle within the D-ring, is not possible. Either the T-handle would have to be relocated or an entirely new type of cable cutter would have to be developed. Consideration must also be given to the possibility of a D-ring impacting the helmet/visor or suit after being cut free at high altitude. I do not feel that the D-ring played any significantly adverse role in this accident and there is no indication of D-ring difficulties in any previous ejection with this system.

h. All future modifications to the ejection system must receive thorough testing and qualification prior to issuance of TCTO kits or service bulletins.

There is no question as to the validity of this recommendation, since the headrest spacers were, from all indications, installed without prior testing and qualification. With this recommendation in mind I have started a review of previous accident board recommendations and ejection system/life support modifications resulting from such recommendations to insure that all pertinent items have received or will receive adequate and appropriate evaluation and qualification testing prior to incorporation.

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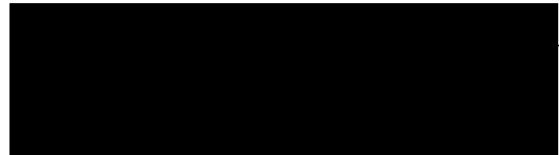
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2. One further subject should be discussed here although it was not mentioned in the accident board's recommendations. The brackets securing the rotary actuator straps on the front of the ejection seat from aircraft #125 and the seat used for seat separation tests had the attaching nuts on the inside of the seat bucket facing the seat kit with the smooth screw heads on the outside of the seat. The ejection seat originally had these brackets installed with the screw heads inside the bucket, so it is apparent that during subsequent handling, inspections, repairs, etc., the screws were reversed. Also, on the seat used for tests which was removed from an OXCART aircraft, the uppermost portion of the knee guards were found to be reversed right for left. Although this latter item has no direct bearing on #125 nor would it probably influence the function of the knee guards it does reflect, along with the strap bracket screw reversal, that errors or oversights are occurring during ground handling of ejection system components. Re-emphasis on careful workmanship, quality control, and adequate supervision as well as specific, detailed instructions may be called for at this time for all personnel involved with egress systems both at [REDACTED] and LAC facilities.

*Was this in accident board?*

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ASD/R&D/OSA

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ASD/R&D/OSA, [REDACTED] (26 January 1967)

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- Cy 1 - ASD/R&D/OSA
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Approved [REDACTED] 2000/05/05 CIA-RDP71B00590R000100080013-4  
HANDLE VIA [REDACTED] CONTROL SYSTEM  
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24 January 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: AFRDR-P  
Headquarters USAF

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ATTENTION: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: A-12 Aircraft Accident Report, S/N 125

1. Transmitted herewith are three copies of the A-12 Major Aircraft Accident Report for aircraft 125.
2. Request copies #1 and #2 be distributed to:
  - a. Copy #1: Director of Aerospace Safety (AFIAS), Norton AFB, California; Attn: Col. James G. Fussell.
  - b. Copy #2: Aeronautical Systems Division (ASZB), Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; Attn: Col. B. N. Bellis.
3. Copy #3 to be retained for your files.

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[REDACTED]  
PAUL N. BACALIS  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Director of Special Activities

Attachments - 3  
As stated

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GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
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HANDLE VIA [REDACTED]  
CONTROL SYSTEM

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HANDLE VIA [REDACTED]  
CONTROL SYSTEM

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OXC/O/OSA [REDACTED] pm

Distribution:

- #1 - AFRDR-P (w/ attachments)
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- #4 - C/OXC/O/OSA
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- #6 - CHRONO

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HANDLE VIA [REDACTED]  
CONTROL SYSTEM

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